COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA IN THE UNITED STATES

Part VII
ART, ENTERTAINMENT, AND MISCELLANEOUS VEHICLES

DECLASSIFIED BY 275 WE Assembly
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IN THE

UNITED STATES

Part VII

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
PREFACE		i
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS		ii
	A. Summary	ii
	B. Conclusions	ii
I.	ART AND ENTERTAINMENT AS PROPAGANDA VEHICLES	1
	A. Paintings and Cartoons	1
	B. Songs and Dances	7
	C. Motion Pictures	15
	D. Stage	29
	E. Radio and Television	37
	F. Phonograph Records	45
II.	MISCELLANEOUS PROPAGANDA VEHICLES	49
	A. Schools	49
	B. Camps	52
	C. Visual Aids	55
	D. Awards and Prizes	57
	E. Flags and Emblems	59
	F. Sports	61
SOURCES		66
APPENDIX		73

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PREFACE

This monograph is the seventh in a series of detailed studies relative to communist propaganda in the United States from the formation of the Communist Party, USA, in 1919 to the present time. (u)

In addition to the channels of propaganda which have been enumerated and explained in previous monographs, there are many others utilized by communists. This monograph examines various forms of art and entertainment, as well as a number of supplementary vehicles, which have been employed by American communists in their propaganda and agitation activities. (u)

Material incorporated in this monograph has been derived from public and confidential sources. The public sources are identified at the end of the monograph, while the confidential sources have been retained by this Bureau. (u)

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A. Summary

Communists have always attempted to combine propaganda with art and entertainment. As a consequence, various forms of art and entertainment have been used extensively, persistently, and effectively as media of communist propaganda and agitation in the United States. These include paintings, cartoons, songs, dances, motion pictures, plays, radio, television, and phonograph records. Other channels which have been widely and successfully employed to serve communist propaganda ends are schools, camps, visual aids, awards, prizes, flags, emblems, and sports. (u)

B. Conclusions

1. Art is regarded by communists as a potent weapon in the class struggle, and, for this reason, communist art always seeks to serve a definite ideological, political, or propaganda purpose. (u)

2. The revolutionary struggle of workers and Negroes against "capitalist exploitation" has been emphasized and propagandized by American communists in their paintings, drawings, cartoons, and other types of art work. (u)

3. Proletarian songs and dances have been resorted to by communists in an effort to arouse class consciousness and to propagandize the communist movement. (u)

4. Communists strive to have "socially realistic" motion pictures and plays written and produced which glorify the Soviet Union and communism and derogate the United States and capitalism. (u)

5. Radio, as well as television and phonograph records to a lesser extent, has provided communists with valuable outlets for the propagation of communist doctrines, policies, and programs. (u)

6. Communist-operated schools and camps are used in an endeavor to instill and to propagandize adults and children with the communist ideology. (u)

7. Visual aids, in the form of filmstrips, slides, charts, and maps, are employed by the Communist Party and its allied organizations as a means of disseminating communist propaganda. (u)

8. Awards and prizes have been relied upon to stimulate and reward Communist Party members and sympathizers and to exert propaganda appeal to noncommunists. (u)

9. Extensive use has been made by communists of flags, emblems, pennants, pins, buttons, badges, and wearing apparel as vehicles of propaganda. (u)

10. Racial discrimination and other manifestations of the class struggle have been exploited in the field of sports as part of the communist propaganda campaign. (u)

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I. ART AND ENTERTAINMENT AS PROPAGANDA VEHICLES

A. Paintings and Cartoons

When Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev recently stated that art is an organic part of the general struggle of the people for communism, [1] he was merely reiterating the old communist slogan, "Art Is a Weapon." Communists consider art to be a powerful weapon in the class struggle. For this reason, communist art is never produced for art's sake, but is intended solely to propagandize and advance the cause of communism. (u)

Art and the class struggle are regarded by communists as inseparable. All communist art is judged by its "socialist realism," that is, whether it serves a positive ideological, political, or propaganda purpose. The objective of communist art is the creation of works saturated with the "grandeur" and "accomplishments" of communism, and reflecting the great "wisdom" and "humanity" of the Communist Party. [2] (u)

"Socialist realism" demands that art be the expression of the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism, glorifying everything concerning communism and slandering everything that opposes it. "Socialist realism" never admits to the possible failure of communism in achieving final victory over capitalism. [3] (u)

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In keeping with the communist concept of the inseparability of art and the class struggle, the worker and the Negro are the subjects of most communist artistic endeavors in the United States. In the 1920's and early 1930's, communist paintings, drawings, cartoons, sculptures, and other forms of art heavily accented and propagandized the revolutionary struggle of workers and Negroes against "capitalist exploitation." Such art was usually characterized by works depicting poverty-stricken workers, downtrodden Negroes, and militant strikers labeled with such titles as "Rising Worker," "Aiming at the Oppressor," "Picket Line," "Lynched Negro," "Solidarity," "Bread Line," "One Meal a Day," "Life and Death of a Worker," and "The Sweat Shop." (u)

In the immediate pre-World War II period, communist art in this country featured such characteristic propaganda products as "Symbols of Fascism"--a figure resembling the late William Randolph Hearst sitting at a table, a gun in each hand, and a gas mask hanging from a nearby tree; "Robber Barons"--two rich, fat industrialists standing beneath a bundle of fasces; "Free Speech"--mounted policemen breaking up a demonstration against fascism with clubs; "Starvation"--a gaunt mother with her starving children huddled about her; "Ku Klux Klan"--a Negro, tied to a post, being (u)

flogged by hooded figures; and "Strike"--a mass of strikers assembled outside a plant guarded by soldiers.[4] (u)

During World War II, communist art in the United States highlighted the war effort, unity between communists and noncommunists, and all-out aid to the Soviet Union in accordance with the communist political and propaganda line. Since the end of the war, the emphasis has shifted to the peace campaign promulgated by the international communist movement. But in all periods of the history of the Communist Party, USA, the leitmotif of communist art has been the never-ending class struggle. (u)

A communist front organization known as the John Reed Club* played an important role in the development and propagandism of early Marxist art in the United States. This organization was formed in 1929 by a group of communist painters, sculptors, musicians, dancers, and writers. It was named in honor of John Reed, the first authentic American communist "hero," who died in 1920 in Moscow and was buried in the Kremlin. (u)

The John Reed Club was affiliated with two international communist fronts--the International Union of Revolutionary Theatres and the International Union of Revolutionary Writers. John Reed Clubs existed in New York City, Philadelphia, Washington, D. C., Chicago, and other major cities.

*See Appendix for citation. (u)

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The John Reed Club urged its members to express in their work their "social convictions" and the "social conflicts" of the world. Besides sponsoring an art school and art exhibitions, the John Reed Club engaged in such agitation and propaganda activities as demanding recognition of Soviet Russia; cooperating in campaigns in defense of "political" prisoners; helping to prepare signs and floats for communist meetings, parades, and other demonstrations; participating in strikes; and assisting in communist election campaigns. (4)

Art exhibitions sponsored by American communists have a twofold purpose--propaganda and fund raising. Landscapes, seascapes, portraits, still life, nudes, and abstractions receive little or no recognition in communist art shows. Exhibitions are usually conducted under the auspices of individual communist artists or by communist front organizations and publications. They have been held on sidewalks, in offices, in basements of apartment houses, in halls belonging to front organizations and labor unions, and in private art galleries. (4)

Many left-wing art exhibitions have been held in the American Contemporary Art Gallery in New York City. This gallery was opened in 1932 as the "cradle of the social content movement" and as a "people's art gallery." (4)

The national art show which was held in New York City in the Spring of 1952 by the American Veterans for Peace, * a communist front, was a typical communist propaganda art exhibition. More than a hundred works of amateur and professional artists from all over the United States were displayed. The exhibits dealt with such subjects as "Peace Demonstrations," "Korea," "Miners," "East River Workers," "Negro and White Together," "Partisans," "Mexican Workers," and "New China." One communist critic commented that the only jarring note in the show was several abstract paintings and nudes.(5) (u)

Communist artists commissioned to do work for noncommunist organizations have taken the liberty of injecting the class struggle into their artistic efforts. In 1933, the late Diego Rivera, the famous Mexican painter who was an intermittent member of the Mexican Communist Party, was hired to execute a mural in Rockefeller Center, then nearing completion in New York City. Rivera caused a furore when he proceeded to incorporate blatant communist propaganda in his work. (u)

One scene in Rivera's mural showed police breaking up an unemployment demonstration. Another depicted a May Day celebration, while still another pictured factory workers listening to a communist propagandist. (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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But it was the face of V. I. Lenin in one scene which created the greatest consternation among officials of Rockefeller Center. Rivera refused to remove it but offered to add Lincoln. The mural was finally rejected and later obliterated, although Rivera was paid in full for his work. (6, 7, 8) (u)

The cartoon has long been used by communists as a propaganda weapon. Through its symbolism, the cartoon presents a propaganda message in easily understandable form. (u)

Robert Minor, a prominent official of the Communist Party, USA, until his death in 1952, was an outstanding cartoonist for influential non-communist newspapers in St. Louis and New York City before he embraced communism and began to draw for the communist press. One of his best-known cartoons is captioned "Workers of the World, Unite!" and first appeared in the Daily Worker* in 1926. This cartoon shows a group of workers and soldiers of the Soviet Union greeting, with outstretched arms, the workers and soldiers of China, India, and Africa. (u)

Illustrative of some of his other drawings is one called "Exodus from Dixie," which shows a mass of Negroes fleeing the Ku Klux Klan against a background of several lynched Negroes hanging from trees. Still another (u)

*The Daily Worker was an east coast communist newspaper which suspended publication on January 13, 1958. (u)

Minor cartoon is the portrayal of a capitalist holding the world with a big slice missing. The missing slice is Russia, held aloft by a worker.(9) (u)

In 1951, the Los Angeles chapter of the Civil Rights Congress,* a communist front, published a four-page cartoon folder called Now It's Even Against the Law! The cartoons purported to illustrate how Benjamin J. Davis, a member of the national committee of the Communist Party, USA, had been arrested and convicted during the historic 1949 Smith Act** trial of eleven communist leaders in New York City merely for championing Negro rights and equality. The pamphlet propagandized for the repeal of the Smith Act and requested funds for the defense of 15 communists then on trial in Los Angeles for violation of the Smith Act. (u)

B. Songs and Dances

Communists have also endeavored to arouse class consciousness and to propagandize the class struggle through songs and dances. "Music for the Masses" became the slogan in the 1930's of the Workers Music League (WML), which was the American section of the international communist front called the (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

**The Smith Act, which was passed by Congress in 1940, makes it unlawful for anyone to knowingly teach and advocate the duty and necessity of overthrowing and destroying the United States Government by force or violence. (u)

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International Music Bureau.* The WML sought to give "ideological" guidance to music that would "express the aims and aspirations" of the communist movement in the United States.(10) (u)

In the 1930's, Hanns Eisler, chairman of the International Music Bureau, came to the United States direct from Moscow to propagandize revolutionary music in this country. He is the brother of Gerhart Eisler, who was an agent of the Communist International** in the United States during the 1930's and 1940's. At the time, Hanns Eisler was a prominent composer in the communist musical world, his most famous work being "Comintern." (u)

Eisler went to Hollywood where, besides writing musical scores for a number of motion pictures, he was active in organizing many new communist "cultural"fronts and in exerting his influence among composers and musicians. Eisler voluntarily left the United States in lieu of deportation in 1948. (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

**The Communist International, or the Comintern, as it was commonly called, was established in 1919 as a union of communist parties throughout the world. Admission to the Comintern was contingent upon the acceptance of 21 conditions. The Communist Party in the United States became an affiliate in 1921 but disaffiliated in 1940. The Comintern was formally dissolved in 1943 as an ostensible gesture of "friendship" and unity between the Soviet Union and its World War II allies. The basic principles and objectives of the Comintern, however, are still in effect and are closely adhered to at the present time by the Communist Party, USA. (u)

To make songs an effective propaganda weapon in the class struggle, numerous songbooks--mostly pocket-size--have been prepared and distributed by communist front organizations for use at meetings, rallies, parades, and strikes and on picket lines. These books have borne such titles as the Red Song Book, Pioneer Song Book, America Sings, Songs of Struggle, Songs of the Class Struggle, Songs of the People, Songs of the Workers Revolutionary Movement, and Lift Every Voice. (u)

The repertoire of songs favored by American communists encompasses a wide variety--folk songs Negro spirituals, migratory workers' songs, songs of the Industrial Workers of the World, * marches, revolutionary songs from the Soviet Union and other countries, union songs, and satiric songs. Many communist favorites have been written as parodies of popular old tunes, so that familiarity with the music helps people to learn the songs easily. (11) (u)

Proletarian composers striving to have their music "accomplish a purpose" have dwelt on anticapitalist, antiwar, antifascist, anti-imperialist, prolabor, pro-Soviet, and other perennial communist propaganda themes. Songs have been dedicated by communist composers to revolution, workers' solidarity, racial equality, "democracy," strikes, communist martyrs, and the like. (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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"The Internationale," composed in 1888 by two Frenchmen, is the battle hymn of the international communist movement. Whenever its strains are heard, communist audiences rise to their feet and sing it with upraised fists.[12] In December, 1950, delegates concluded the 15th National Convention of the Communist Party, USA, by singing "The Internationale." (u)

Many other songs of revolutionary or Russian flavor have been written to emphasize and propagandize the international solidarity of the working class. Hanns Eisler's "Comintern" has been translated into more, different languages than any other revolutionary song except "The Internationale." "The Scarlet Banner," which calls upon workers everywhere to march under the red flag of communism, is also a communist favorite. "Solidarity Forever," sung to the tune of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," is another popular communist song stressing that in union there is strength.[13, 14, 15] (u)

There are songs which have propagandized the wonders and progress of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). For example, "Moscow Metro," sung to the melody of "Tavern in the Town," was written as a tribute to the Moscow subway.[16] (u)

The antifascist, antiwar sentiments of communists have been expressed in innumerable songs. One of the best-known antifascist songs is "The Peat Bog Soldiers," which tells of Nazi concentration camp prisoners (u)

marching to and from their work in a peat bog. The "Dave Doran Song," composed in 1938, was a tribute to a Young Communist League* leader who was killed while fighting with communist forces during the Spanish Civil War. "Don't Buy Anything Japanese" was a boycott song composed during the Sino-Japanese War.[17] "Talking Atomic Blues," a recent antiwar song, was designed to propagandize against atomic warfare.[18] (u)

Because music has been found to have a propaganda effect on strikers, American communists have written many songs concerning strikes, picket lines, and labor unions. For instance, "We Shall Not Be Moved," originally a southern hymn, has been sung during sit-down strikes and evictions. "Hold the Fort," an English transport workers' strike song with words set to the music of an old gospel hymn, has been sung on picket lines in the United States for years. "Union Card," sung in strikes and parades, has the familiar southern melody, "Hand Me Down My Walkin' Cane." The words of the old American folk song, "Clementine," have been changed in order to persuade workers to join unions.[19] (u)

Joe Hill, a Swedish-born labor organizer who was executed in Utah in 1915 for murder, is immortalized by communists in a popular "martyr" song, "Joe Hill." Hill's last words, spoken while he faced a firing squad, were alleged to be: "Don't mourn for me, Organize!"[20] (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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Lynching and racial discrimination are frequent topics of communist songs. "Strange Fruit," for example, is a favorite antilynch song. "White, Brown, and Black Blues" and "Free and Equal Blues" are two antidiscrimination songs popular in communist circles.[21] (U)

Shortly before World War II, a communist group of singers known as the Almanac Singers* originated what became known as "hootenannies." Created as parties to raise money for rent in the Greenwich Village area of New York City, "hootenannies" were social gatherings of small groups of people who would spend the evening singing and composing songs. Following the war, "hootenannies" became increasingly popular with communists, and soon involved large audiences in such places as Carnegie Hall and Town Hall in New York City. (U)

Songs rendered at these affairs consist of songs of the types previously described. Many of the singers accompany themselves on the piano, guitar, banjo, or mandolin. "Hootenannies" artfully mix communist propaganda with entertainment. They have been found useful for recruiting new members into the Communist Party, particularly young people, as most of the participants are youthful. (U)

*See Appendix for citation.

Ever since the establishment of the Workers Music League in the early 1930's, other organizations have played an important part as propaganda media for revolutionary music. One of these is the Metropolitan Music School (MMS), in New York City, which boasts of being a music school with a "social outlook." The MMS was originally known as the Workers Music School, having been founded by a group of communists in 1934 as an outgrowth of the WML. The MMS offers courses in Soviet, Chinese, Negro, and Jewish music. (4)

A number of organizations have been created to supply entertainment--singers, pianists, accordionists, guitarists, choruses, and orchestras--for affairs given by the Communist Party, communist fronts, and left-wing unions. People's Songs, * formed immediately after World War II, was one of the first organizations of this type. It was succeeded by People's Artists, * and more recently, by a group called Sing Out. (4)

In addition to serving as booking agencies for communist entertainers, these organizations have sponsored "hootenannies," dances, and concerts; conducted song writers' workshops; and given courses in square and folk dancing. The musical programs offered by the entertainers furnished by these organizations have been devoted largely to revolutionary and propaganda songs. (4)

*See Appendix for citation.

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The American-Soviet Music Society (ASMS), * an affiliate of a communist front called the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, * endeavored to popularize and propagandize Soviet music in the United States during the postwar period. It was established in 1946 for the purpose of promoting American understanding and appreciation of Soviet music. The ASMS sponsored a number of concerts throughout the country featuring the works of modern Russian composers. (4)

For years, the foremost communist propagandist in musical circles has been Paul Robeson, the famous Negro singer. Robeson, who is reported to be a member of the Communist Party, fancies himself an important spokesman for the American Negro. His concerts follow a pattern of being part recital and part propaganda. He sometimes makes propaganda speeches between songs, but more frequently he does so at the end of his concert. In his speeches, he invariably lavishes warm praise on the "peace-loving" Soviet Union, heavily emphasizing the "complete absence" of racial discrimination in that country as contrasted to the "extreme racism" which he claims exists in the United States. (4)

Robeson's concert fare consists of Negro spirituals, Hebrew folk songs, classical Russian works, Spanish Civil War songs, and American folk (4)

*See Appendix for citation.

and revolutionary songs. He frequently alters the original words of traditional American songs to convey a communist propaganda message. The words of "Ol' Man River," for instance, he has changed from "You get a little drunk and you land in jail" to "You have a little grit and you land in jail." (u)

Dance groups have been formed by communists in order to propagandize the Party line among dance devotees. These groups have borne such revolutionary names as the Red Dancers, Workers Dance League, Vanguard Dance Group, Rebel Dancers, American Revolutionary Dancers, Victory Dance Group, and New Dance Group. (u)

Dance numbers featured by communist dance groups have embodied communist propaganda themes, as can be readily surmised from the titles of a few: "Under the Swastika," "Soviet Youth Day," "Dance of Death," "Scottsboro Dance," "Southern Song of Protest," "Lynch," "Strike," "Camaraderie," "Studies in Conflict," "Work and Play," and "Ah Peace." (u)

C. Motion Pictures

From the earliest days of motion pictures, communists have recognized this medium as a potent instrument of propaganda. "Of all the arts," Lenin once said, "the motion picture is for us the most important."(22) Gregory Zinoviev, who was chairman of the executive committee of the Communist (u)

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International in the 1920's, declared that the motion picture "can and must become a mighty weapon of Communist propaganda and for the enlightening of the widest working masses."(23) (4)

Motion pictures have been a powerful force in shaping the minds and mores of the American people for more than 40 years. Because of the vast influence of motion pictures, it is only logical that American communists have attempted to adopt this channel for communist propaganda ends. (4)

The propaganda value of motion pictures was realized by communists in the United States in the early 1920's when they produced a film called "Russia Through the Shadows," which was in the nature of an appeal in behalf of the famine victims of Soviet Russia. It was made up of some films of famine scenes obtained from the Workers' International Relief, * an international communist front organization, together with the communists' own photography of various relief activities in the United States. (4)

Russian themes dominated propaganda films produced and shown by American communists in the 1920's. "The Fifth Year" was compiled from a number of Russian newsreels depicting May Day celebrations, (4)

*See Appendix for citation.

Soviet trials, Red Army maneuvers, sports, and industrial reconstruction; "Russia in Overalls" stressed the Soviet Union's industrial growth; "Russia Today" told of the social and industrial life of Russian asbestos miners; and "Lenin" contained scenes from old films in which Lenin appeared, as well as pictures of his funeral. (u)

American communists also produced several newsreels on such domestic subjects as the Paterson, New Jersey, silk strike; "police brutality" in the Chicago stockyards; meetings of unemployed World War I veterans; presidential candidates; and the like. Early communist-made films in this country were exhibited in rented theaters, halls, and labor temples.(24) (u)

A communist front organization known as the Film and Photo League* specialized during the 1930's in exploiting the Depression by producing documentary motion pictures and still photography relating to bread lines, unemployment demonstrations, strikes, and picketing. (u)

In 1936, the national election campaign committee of the Communist Party, USA, released an hour-long film entitled "Voice of Progress." This film was comprised of scenes showing an eviction; an act of violence by a fascist organization called the Black Legion; and Earl Browder, then general (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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secretary of the Communist Party, USA, reading the planks of the Party's election platform.[25] (u)

For a number of years, the International Workers Order (IWO),* a communist front, sponsored propaganda films. In 1937, the IWO produced a documentary motion picture concerning a May Day parade in New York City which was shown to communist groups throughout the country. After World War II, the IWO continued to sponsor films on communist propaganda subjects dealing with socialized medicine, racial equality, world control of atomic energy, and Soviet progress. (u)

Communists increased the use of motion pictures for propaganda purposes at the end of the War, films being shown frequently at meetings of the Communist Party, communist front organizations, and left-wing unions. In 1948, for instance, a film and lecture series was held by the Communist Party in St. Louis. The series covered the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and included such Soviet films as "One Day in the U.S.S.R.," "Road to Life," "Youth of Maxim," "Man with a Gun," and "We Are from Kronstadt." A Party official acted as lecturer at each showing of these pictures. (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

The California Labor School, * a communist front in San Francisco, gave a special motion-picture series in 1950 in which the following films were exhibited: "Blockade," a story of the Spanish Civil War; "Turning Point," which depicts the Russian victory at Stalingrad in World War II; "Nuremberg Trials," a documentary film detailing Nazi crimes and punishment; "Road to Life," which describes the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents in the Soviet Union; "China's Four Hundred Million," a story of China's "fight for independence"; and the "Hollywood Ten," a film in which ten motion-picture writers and directors convicted of contempt before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1947 tell why they were imprisoned. (u)

A motion picture which recently evoked considerable notoriety was "Salt of the Earth," inspired by a ten months' strike of Mexican-American zinc miners in New Mexico in 1951-1952. The film was produced in 1954, at a cost of $125,000, under the aegis of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, one of eleven unions expelled in 1949-1950 by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) for being communist dominated. (u)

"Salt of the Earth" was written by Michael Wilson, directed by Herbert Biberman, and produced by Paul Jarrico. All three of these (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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individuals, long prominent in Hollywood, have refused to reveal their Communist Party affiliations in their appearances before hearings of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. (u)

"Salt of the Earth" features the clash between the mining community and the "greedy, brutal" mine owners. The sheriff in the film is depicted as the "tool of the bosses." The conflict is one of labor versus corrupt law and capitalism and dramatizes the communist claim that in the United States the law defends not justice but the capitalist. The principal communist propaganda messages of this picture are that working-class strength and unity can produce victory, that a single union can marshal great power against a large corporation, and that the picket line can be effective against the "capitalist bosses." (u)

"Salt of the Earth" was hailed by the communist press as a film of "overpowering beauty and realism," the "truest and most compelling" American film ever made, showing that there are "brave men and women in our midst who are fighting to make America truly free."[26] (u)

The rise of fascism in Europe in the 1930's gave enormous impetus to communist activity in Hollywood. At that time, there began (u)

a steady flow of Communist Party members and communist sympathizers into the motion-picture industry. Some were native-born Americans; others were refugees who had fled before the growing power of Hitler. They managed to secure responsible positions in the film industry, especially in the fields of writing and directing, through which the ideological and propaganda content of pictures could be controlled or influenced. (4)

By 1935, the American people began to be subjected to pictures with social, economic, and political themes which greatly served communist propaganda ends. For propaganda purposes, the Communist Party publicized films which depicted the United States and capitalism in an unfavorable light, derogated the free enterprise system, discredited industrialists, presented wealth as evil, or belittled American political institutions. (4)

Communists extolled a number of "message" films produced during this period which criticized or satirized various aspects of American life. These included "Fury," "Black Legion," "They Won't Forget," "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town," "Of Mice and Men," "I Was a Fugitive from a Chain Gang," "Modern Times," "The Grapes of Wrath," and many others. (27, 28, 29, 30) (4)

"The Grapes of Wrath" has been especially singled out for communist propaganda praise. It has been acclaimed as a "motion picture (4)

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masterpiece, unadulterated, uncensored, and triumphant" because it presents the "humble mass, its misery and exploitation, and the details of capitalist rot."(31) In reappraising this picture in 1956, sixteen years after it was originally shown, the Daily Worker observed that "The Grapes of Wrath" is the only Hollywood film ever made that took a stand against "redbaiting."(32) (u)

"The Life of Emile Zola" is another picture of the 1930's which has received widespread communist approbation. When this picture was originally released,the Daily Worker commented that it was the "most courageous film ever made in America. For the first time Hollywood has dared to give us an historical film that is unmistakably anti-war, anti-fascist all along the line...as contemporary as the Scottsboro Case, or the Spanish Revolution."(33) (u)

Following the Nazi invasion of Russia in June, 1941, and until the end of World War II, a number of pictures were issued in Hollywood which contain"antifascist"or pro-Soviet themes. Among them were "Hangmen Also Die," "Edge of Darkness," "North Star," "The Battle of Russia," "This Land Is Mine," "Watch on the Rhine," "Hostages," "Song of Russia," "Three Russian Girls," "Tender Comrade," "The Master Race," "The Seventh Cross," "Tomorrow the World," "Keeper of the Flame," and "Mission to Moscow." (u)

In 1941, Mission to Moscow, based on the memoirs of Joseph E. Davies, American ambassador to the USSR in the late 1930's, was adapted as a motion picture. The film was rated by the communist press as a "political document whose importance was not only in its destruction of imbedded prejudices, but represented our Soviet ally with honesty and conscientiousness."(34) (u)

Communists are as concerned with seeing that no anticommunist or anti-Soviet pictures are produced in the United States as they are with having procommunist and pro-Russian films made. Between 1935 and the end of World War II, communists exerted such strong influence in the American motion-picture industry that relatively few anticommunist or anti-Soviet films were made. (u)

Following the war, the communist press loudly publicized such "socially realistic" films as "The Farmer's Daughter," "The Best Years of Our Lives," "Crossfire," and "Gentlemen's Agreement." These were described as films that contained "elements of vigorous social criticism," and reflected "some aspect of the humanist, democratic and anti-fascist values that were the life blood of American thought" during the 1930's and in the "war against fascism."(35) (u)

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A prime film favorite of communists is Charlie Chaplin, hailed as a "people's artist," whose pictures have consistently explored "progressive" social, economic, and political themes. Before he left the United States permanently in 1952 for residence in Switzerland, Chaplin lent his name to many communist causes and enterprises. (U)

After the world premiere in London in September, 1957, of Chaplin's most recent film, "A King in New York," the communist press initiated a propaganda campaign in its behalf. The Daily Worker published favorable excerpts from a number of foreign reviews, since the picture is a vicious tirade against the United States and is, therefore, admirably suited to the communist propaganda line. (36) (U)

In the film, Chaplin portrays the ruler of a mythical European kingdom. He is a "humane, liberal, and progressive" monarch who aspires to use atomic energy only for peaceful purposes and thereby to raise the living standards of his people. But at every turn he is thwarted by a conspiracy of government officials and politicians, all of whom are "American agents." The "warmongering" ministers finally provoke a revolution which overthrows the king and drives him into exile. He comes to the United States, but here he is subjected to "witch-hunting" for his "humanitarian" (U)

ideas even more than he was in his own country. Ultimately, he flees "reactionary" America for a more "hospitable" Europe, after some "unpleasant" experiences with the House Committee on Un-American Activities.[37] (u)

"A King in New York" was made in Europe and is now being exhibited in Paris, Rome, and elsewhere. It has not appeared in this country. (u)

In October, 1947, the House Committee on Un-American Activities launched an investigation to determine the extent of communist infiltration, influence, and propaganda in the American motion-picture industry. The objective of this Committee was characterized by communists as an attempt to "debase the liberal's political and cultural heritage and to bring him to heel in the prosecution of the cold war."[38] An imposing array of screen and stage celebrities journeyed to Washington, D. C., to protest the hearings. Included among these notables were Danny Kaye, Gene Kelly, Lauren Bacall, John Huston, Arthur Miller, George S. Kaufman, the late John Garfield, and the late Humphrey Bogart.[39] (u)

A number of hostile witnesses were subpoenaed by the Committee. Ten writers, directors, and producers who refused to testify in response to questions concerning their communist affiliations were cited for contempt and (u)

were later convicted and sent to prison. These individuals came to be known as the "Hollywood Ten." (4) (u)

The widespread communist influence in the film industry was further brought to light at additional hearings of the House Committee in the Spring of 1951 by the testimony of numerous former communists active in motion pictures. The inquiries of the Committee eventually caused Hollywood studios to resort to a general house cleaning of communists. A number of communists in the screen colony broke with the Communist Party, while many who did not left the industry. (40, 41) (u)

With the communist exodus from Hollywood, many anticommunist and anti-Russian pictures began to appear on the screen. Among these were "The Iron Curtain," "Man on a Tightrope," "The Red Danube," "Walk a Crooked Mile," "I Married a Communist," "Trial," "My Son John," and "Walk East on Beacon." These films, of course, were bitterly attacked in the communist press. (42, 43, 44) (u)

The complaint was made by one communist publication that "Walk East on Beacon" did not give the "slightest hint that the Communist Party is a working-class movement fighting for democracy, Negro-white equality and PEACE and ultimate Socialism." (45) (u)

Motion pictures which run counter to the communist political and propaganda line are dealt with in a vitriolic manner. One of the films most consistently denunciated by communists has been "The Birth of a Nation." Since it was made, more than 40 years ago, the communist press has continually attacked the film for its "degradation of the Negro."(46) (u)

Similarly condemned by the communist press has been "Gone With the Wind." At the time of its initial release in 1939, the film was described in the communist press as an "insidious glorification of the slave market," a picture which "uses every open and concealed tricks of slander against the Negro people...re-enacting the despised 'Birth of a Nation' with 1939 technique and efficiency."(47) (u)

In 1954, fifteen years after "Gone With the Wind" was first produced, the communist press was still heaping propaganda abuse on it. The Worker* stated that the "Dixiecrats" should be "grateful" to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for reviving this film, as it could be "useful" in their fight to block enforcement of the recent Supreme Court decision against school segregation.(48) (u)

Film glorification of the American Armed Forces has been a perennial communist propaganda target. Tributes to the services in such films (u)

*The Worker is an east coast communist weekly newspaper. (u)

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as "Strategic Air Command," "An Annapolis Story," "Battle Cry," "The Long Grey Line," and "The Eternal Sea" have received scorching condemnation in the communist press.[49] (u)

Communists criticized the picture "Viva Zapata!" because it "profaned" the character of Emiliano Zapata, a Mexican revolutionist in the early years of this century. The complaint was voiced that this film fails to show the "counter-revolutionary intervention and economic penetration of U. S. imperialism" in Mexico.[50] It was further alleged that Hollywood had deliberately selected a "moment of Mexican history for its lesson in the futility of people's movements."[51] (u)

A propaganda attack on law enforcement was the substance of the Daily Worker's review of the picture "Dragnet." "When Webb and partner," this publication noted, put a "tail on a suspect and frisk him a dozen times a day in public, one gets a rough idea of the kind of treatment political prisoners can expect" at the hands of law enforcement officers. It was also contended that the picture constitutes a plea for legalized wire tapping.[52] (u)

Communists have long boycotted motion pictures which they believe criticize the Soviet Union or condemn communism. In 1937, for (u)

example, when "Tsar to Lenin" was produced, communists bitterly denounced the picture, claiming it gave the impression that although Lenin played the leading role in the Red Revolution, Leon Trotsky was credited with creating the USSR. Communists, trade-unionists, and "friends" of the Soviet Union were requested to boycott the film by telephoning, calling in person, or sending delegations of protest to the theater showing the picture.(53) (u)

"The Iron Curtain" in 1948 was excoriated as a "fraud." The film, according to the Daily Worker, was an attempt to "bully the American people into accepting the peacetime draft and a huge war program on the ground that the Soviet Union prepares aggression against its neighbors."(54) As a result of this criticism, Party members and sympathizers picketed theaters in New York City, Cleveland, and elsewhere, to protest the making and showing of this film. (u)

D. Stage

While the stage reaches a far smaller audience than does the motion picture, plays have also served communist propagandists as a vehicle for promulgating the communist ideology. (u)

The first communist attempt to build a theater on a "social foundation" was made by the New Playwrights Theatre in New York City in 1927. New (u)

Playwrights proclaimed itself a "workers theater" and a "clearing house for ideas and a focus for social protest."[55] This group declared that it had a "social responsibility...in crystallizing rebellion." New Playwrights frankly admitted that the plays it intended to put on would be "working class propaganda."[56] (u)

One of the first plays produced by the New Playwrights Theatre was John Howard Lawson's "Loud Speaker." Lawson was destined to become one of the "Hollywood Ten." The story of "Loud Speaker" deals with the rise to fame and fortune of an American who, after acquiring wealth, has political aspirations on a "return to decency" platform. As an "expose of American fakery," this play satirizes politics, religion, romance, women, newspapers, radio, and such character types as the political campaign manager, the tabloid reporter, the "sob sister," and the bathing beauty.[57] (u)

The revolutionary theater came into its own in the 1930's. Against a backdrop of the Depression, unemployment, and the threat of a second World War, left-wing playwrights became increasingly concerned with "class problems" and "social and political reality." In their view, the theater was to be used as a weapon of propaganda to condition people for eventual social, economic, and political changes. Proletarian dramatists such as John Howard Lawson, Lillian Hellman, (u)

Clifford Odets, Albert Maltz, Donald Ogden Stewart, Michael Gold, and John Wexley were instrumental in giving impetus and direction to the revolutionary drama.[58, 59, 60] (u)

The League of Workers Theatres (LWT)* was formed in April, 1932, as an outgrowth of a conference of workers' cultural societies sponsored the year before by the John Reed Club and New Masses, * a communist cultural magazine.[61] The LWT was the American section of the International Workers Dramatic Union, an international communist front organization. The founding conference of the LWT clearly revealed the political and propaganda character of the workers' theaters when it expressed the intention of proving to the masses that "revolution is the only way out.... As agitation and propaganda groups, we have to convince the masses of the necessity of the class struggle and to arouse them to action...."[62] (u)

In an attempt to combine propaganda with entertainment, a great number of workers' theaters were established throughout the country. Among these were the Group Theatre, * Experimental Theatre, Theatre Collective, Theatre of Action, Negro People's Theatre of the South, Jack London Dramatic Group, Chicago Blue Blouses, New Theatre of Hollywood, Workers Laboratory, Vanguard Players, Theatre Union, and New Theatre of Philadelphia.[63, 64, 65] (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

THE DUNLAP SOCIETY

Workers' theaters concentrated on "agitprop" plays, the term "agitprop" meaning "agitation and propaganda" in communist jargon. These groups recruited playwrights and performers from the ranks of workers. Many of the groups were mobile and required no stage or scenery. Plays were performed in meeting halls, in lofts, or in the streets. During the 1931 election campaign, for example, a workers' theater group in New York City presented a play entitled "Vote Communist!" at open-air meetings.[66, 67] (u)

The New Theatre of Philadelphia had a playhouse of its own. It also had a "flying squadron" of actors and technicians, organized into mobile groups which performed skits and one-act plays before union meetings, strikers, and social gatherings within a 50-mile radius of Philadelphia. Typical of the plays produced by this theater is "So It Didn't Work," which tells how an employer tries to lower the wages of a group of needle-trades workers.[68] (u)

During the early 1930's, communists also attempted to establish workers' theaters in order to agitate and propagandize among Negroes and the Jewish people. For example, one dramatic organization called Artef* produced "social plays for workers" in Yiddish. Artef was sponsored by the Morning Freiheit,* a Yiddish communist newspaper.[69, 70] (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

Early revolutionary plays were usually crude, biased, repetitious, and violent, frequently ending with a mass demonstration. John Howard Lawson's play, "Marching Song," is typical. At the time of its production in 1937, it was praised by the Daily Worker as the "best labor play, the most eloquent and poetic dramatization of the class struggle of our time."[71] In it, Lawson presents the story of a strike in which the strike leader is "murdered" by the police. "Working-class solidarity" is forged as a result. As the curtain falls, electrical workers cut off the city's current, the streets are filled with the "angry proletariat," and a general strike is precipitated.[72] (u)

Other plays produced during the 1920's and 1930's bore such illuminating "social protest" titles as "Lynch Law," "Panic," "We, the People," "Judgment Day," "Parade," "Let Freedom Ring," "Tide Rising," "Awake and Sing," "Dead End," and "Processional."[73] (u)

In the late 1930's, communists enthusiastically endorsed Living Newspaper plays produced by a New York theater unit of the Federal Theater Project of the Works Progress Administration. Living Newspaper was an agitation and propaganda theater which dramatized contemporary news events and topics. Its plays employed statistics and documentation by means of blackboards, screens, and loud-speakers, and also made use of music, songs, and dances. (u)

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The first Living Newspaper production was "Ethiopia," a documentary dramatization of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. Some of the other plays presented by Living Newspaper included "Triple A Plowed Under," a documentary of food scarcity and "profiteering" in the United States; "Injunction Granted," a story of labor's struggle to achieve unionization; "One Third a Nation," a drama depicting how the "real estate monopolies" were responsible for ill-housed Americans; and "Medicine," a plea for socialized medicine. (74, 75) (u)

During World War II, Stage for Action* was organized in New York City to stage plays and skits dramatizing "vital" national issues. Within a few years, Stage for Action had affiliates in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D. C., Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other large cities. (u)

After the War, Stage for Action resumed its production of "social protest" plays, among them being "You're Next" (civil liberties), "Case of the Empty Purse" (price control), "Skin Deep" (racial theories), and "The Battle for 3-B" (housing shortage). (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

In Hollywood, communists sponsored and directed an organization known as the Actors' Laboratory.* Founded in 1943, it served as a combination training school and experimental theater for "social" plays until its demise in 1950. (4)

The dramatization of Richard Wright's novel, Native Son, in 1941 was acclaimed by communist critics as a "positive thrust against the conspiracy of bigotry, hate, and oppression which poisons our national life." Wright is a prominent Negro author, and at the time he wrote this novel, he was a member of the Communist Party. New Masses said that "no sensitive human being can leave the theater without realizing...that the oppression of the Negro people...is a rotting sore in the national organism."(76) (4)

During the War, another play, "Counterattack," a story of Russian resistance against the Nazis, was applauded in the communist press as a "melodrama" with "subtleties and historical truth."(77) (4)

With the end of World War II, the revolutionary theater continued its exploration of such "social" theses as racial discrimination, labor problems, and American "democracy." In 1948, Caravan Theater, a traveling drama group, performed at factory gates in support of the campaign of Henry A. Wallace, presidential candidate of the Progressive Party.*(78) (4)

*See Appendix for citation.

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In 1949, People's Drama* was founded as a "theater...of the people...by the people...for the people." Its aim was to produce plays about the "issues confronting people today."(79) The subject matter of the plays presented by People's Drama typifies the communist propaganda efforts of this group: "They Shall Not Die" is based on the Scottsboro Case; "Private Life of the Master Race" details the rise of fascism in Germany and its "parallel forces in American life today"; "Nat Turner" is the story of a Negro who led an uprising of slaves in Virginia in 1831; and "John Brown" recounts the life of the notorious abolitionist. (4)

Contemporary Theatre* and Topical Theatre are two more representative proletarian dramatic groups which were formed in the 1950's. They were created for the avowed purpose of fostering the "principles of democracy, social progress and peace." Topical Theatre, which was intended to fill the void left by the suspension of Stage for Action, specializes in one-act plays. In addition to regular appearances in its own hall in New York City, Topical Theatre provides mobile presentations. (4)

A characteristic "social" play offered by Topical Theatre is one entitled "The People's Champ," which deals with racketeering in prize fights. The leading figure is a Negro champion who, after being defeated (4)

*See Appendix for citation.

in his last bout, decides to quit the ring and become a "champ" in the political arena, fighting for the rights of the Negro people.[80] (u)

E. Radio and Television

About 1935, the Communist Party, USA, became aware that radio, because of its vast listening audience and tremendous area of coverage, was an extremely important propaganda medium.[81] (u)

Although the Communist Party has never applied for a license to operate a radio station in its own name, communists did form a front known as the People's Radio Foundation (PRF)* in 1944 for the specific purpose of obtaining a license to operate FM radio stations. The PRF dissolved in 1947 after having been unsuccessful in procuring a license from the Federal Communications Commission. (u)

Due to its inability to establish a radio station under its own control, the Communist Party has resorted to other methods for securing radio time by which to disseminate propaganda. From time to time, the Communist Party, by claiming to be a legitimate political party, has requested and received free radio-broadcast time. In 1940, for instance, the acceptance speeches of Earl Browder and James W. Ford, communist presidential and vice-presidential (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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candidates, respectively, were delivered over a coast-to-coast hookup granted by two major radio networks. (u)

Party representatives have appeared in a number of radio debates and forums. William Z. Foster, then national chairman of the Communist Party, USA, engaged in a nationwide radio debate with Congressman Karl Mundt in 1948 on the question of the enactment of anticommunist legislation. Foster, naturally, argued against any such law.[82] (u)

Eugene Dennis, current national affairs secretary of the Communist Party, USA, took propaganda advantage of his guest appearance on a radio program in June, 1957, to defend the Communist Party. Dennis, in reply to questions put to him, staunchly denied that the Communist Party, USA, advocates the overthrow of the United States Government by force or violence. On the contrary, he insisted that it favors only a "peaceful constitutional transition to socialism."[83] (u)

The Communist Party has frequently relied upon radio time purchased from commercially owned radio stations for self-sponsored programs. In 1936, the Party began to use radio extensively on a local basis. In Philadelphia, for example, communists utilized the radio in (u)

preparation for their May Day celebration, for the organization of a hunger march to the state capitol in Harrisburg, and for an election campaign.[84] (u)

In 1944, Gus Hall, then head of the Ohio Communist Party, broadcast weekly, under the guise of being a news analyst, over a commercial station in Cleveland. Prior to election day, the substance of Hall's broadcasts was of a political nature; after the election, he commenced to give a communist propaganda slant to current national and international events. (u)

The Communist Party in the upper Ohio River Valley conducted a series of Sunday-morning broadcasts during 1946-1947. The propaganda target groups of these programs were the coal miners and steelworkers, who constituted a major segment of the labor population of that region.[85] (u)

Communist candidates for public office have frequently used paid radio broadcasts. In 1955, Charles Nusser, chairman of the New Jersey Communist Party, made a series of broadcasts in behalf of his candidacy for the New Jersey State Assembly. Communist candidates for local, state, and national office have regularly, during the last 20 years, employed commercial radio facilities in New York City to deliver campaign speeches. (u)

Communist propaganda has also been manifested in radio time bought by communist organizations and by communist-dominated labor unions. (u)

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In 1938, the Young Communist League conducted a radio program to endorse the candidacy of Israel Amter, communist candidate for Congress in New York City. A prominent front called the American League for Peace and Democracy * gave a series of broadcasts in 1939 called "America Answers Coughlin," which was heard over a radio station in Newark, New Jersey. (u)

For nine months in 1947, the International Workers Order sponsored a 15-minute program in which a procommunist commentator condemned American foreign policy and various governmental security procedures. The United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, expelled by the CIO in 1949 for being communist dominated, sponsored weekly "news" broadcasts on a local basis in 1947 and on a coast-to-coast network the following year. (u)

The New York State chairman of the Labor Youth League, * a communist front, made a radio speech in 1954 which propagandized the communist line. He called for the support of candidates of the communist-controlled American Labor Party, * voiced opposition to universal military training, and called for action to guarantee enforcement of the Supreme Court's ruling outlawing school segregation. (86) (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

Communist propaganda has also been disseminated through foreign-language broadcasts in the United States conducted under the auspices of communist fronts and publications representing foreign-born groups. Until the late 1940's, numerous foreign-language broadcasts containing communist propaganda were directed to Polish-, Hungarian-, Lithuanian-, Serbo-Croatian-, and Russian-language groups. Many of the stations which sold this broadcast time finally required that foreign-language programs had to be followed immediately with exact English-language translations. As this requirement placed an expensive burden on the foreign-language sponsors, most of these programs were discontinued. (u)

An integral and important part of communist infiltration and propaganda in the radio industry in past years was represented by communists and their sympathizers who had a hand in the production and presentation of radio programs. A great measure of the communist success in propagandizing the American public via the air waves was realized through commentators, writers, and directors who gave a propaganda slant to their programs. (u)

During the 1930's and 1940's, a number of procommunist and pro-Soviet radio commentators appeared on the air, sometimes subtly but frequently blatantly, injecting communist propaganda into their broadcasts. (u)

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One of the most notorious communist-line commentators was William S. Gailmor, who broadcast for a major radio station in New York City. Gailmor was also a prodigious fund raiser for countless communist fronts during the period from 1940 to 1950. He was finally dropped from the radio for his extreme left-wing views. (u)

Not all communist propaganda efforts have been confined to attempts tc insert communist propaganda into radio broadcasts. In 1947, a communist front called the Voice of Freedom Committee (VOFC)* was organized to "democratize" radio networks. The VOFC issued a bulletin containing recommendations to its subscribers--referred to as monitors--as to the individuals or programs they should support or oppose. Pressure was exerted by these monitors by means of letters and telephone calls to radio stations and networks. (u)

The VOFC commended radio commentators who followed the Communist Party line--such as William S. Gailmor, Johannes Steel, Arthur Gaeth, and J. Raymond Walsh--and attacked radio personalities who were hostile to communism and the Soviet Union--such as Fulton Lewis, Jr., Walter Winchell, George E. Sokolsky, H. V. Kaltenborn, and Gabriel Heatter. The VOFC was critical of anticommunist and anti-Soviet broadcasts, (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

the "black-listing" of procommunist radio and television performers, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the Federal loyalty program, "biased" reporting in the Korean War, and United States foreign policy. (u)

By the 1950's, communist propaganda over the air had been sharply curtailed as an immediate consequence of the "cold war," although communists are still able to purchase radio time for political and propaganda purposes. (u)

The impact and influence of television as a mass communication medium are appreciated by communists, but they have been able to make little use of it as a channel of propaganda. This is principally due to the almost prohibitive cost of securing television time and the reluctance of television stations and networks to sell time to communists. (u)

Nonetheless, a number of propaganda opportunities have been afforded communists by virtue of guest appearances on television programs. In the latter part of 1957, for instance, John Wingate, on his "Nightbeat" program in New York City, interviewed several prominent communists and communist sympathizers. In August, Simon Gerson, executive editor of the Daily Worker and a member of the national committee of the Communist Party, USA, when interviewed by Wingate, blandly asserted that the Communist Party (u)

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is a "completely independent American working class party" whose "only allegiance is to the American people."(87) (u)

Rockwell Kent, chairman of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, an old communist front, when questioned by Wingate on his appearance in September, refused to condemn Soviet intervention in the Hungarian Revolution of October, 1956. Instead, Kent mouthed the communist propaganda line that the revolt had been exploited by "fascist and other forces." (u)

The communist press devotes a good deal of attention to criticizing television programs, just as it does motion pictures and stage plays. Caustic reviews have appeared following such anticommunist telecasts as "Nightmare in Red," "Five Who Shook the World," and "I Led Three Lives." (u)

"Nightmare in Red," a documentary film recounting the rise of communism from the Red Revolution of 1917 to the present time, was bitterly protested by communists as a defamation of Soviet Russia. The Daily Worker asserted that the film is an "orgy of hatred for the USSR," and employs "every time-worn cliche used by the enemies of the Soviet Union ever since 1919."(88) According to the Daily Worker, the same anti-Soviet viewpoint characterized the presentation of "Five Who Shook the World."(89) (u)

Communists have been particularly vehement against the television series, "I Led Three Lives," which is based on the life story of Herbert A. Philbrick, who testified as a Government witness during the 1949 Smith Act trial of communist leaders in New York City. This series, contended the communist press, "falsely connects the Communists with murder, sabotage and treason."(90) (u)

Even a television offering which is given a favorable review sometimes lends itself to communist propaganda. The class struggle was raised when The Worker commented on the widely heralded telecast of "A Night to Remember," which tells of the sinking of the Titanic by an iceberg in 1912 in which over 1, 500 persons perished. The Worker claimed that the play clearly evidences the "class character of the tragedy" by revealing that the great majority of the survivors were from the top,luxury deck, which was well supplied with lifeboats, while most of those who died were in the steerage which did not provide a single lifeboat.(91) (u)

F. Phonograph Records

Phonograph records have been used by communists for years as a method of propaganda. In the 1930's, American communists began to make (u)

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

recordings of communist songs, speeches, and lectures and to use them as aids in studying the Russian language. (u)

The Timely Recording Company was one of the first recording firms to produce and sell phonograph records devoted to working-class and revolutionary songs. In 1935, this company published a group of communist songs which included "The Internationale," "Comintern," "United Front," "Forward, We've Not Forgotten," "The Soup Song," and "In Praise of Learning."[92] (u)

A number of recording companies sprang up in the succeeding decade to produce and sell records and albums containing communist propaganda songs. Among these firms were Keynote Recordings, * Young People's Records, * Challenge Records, Circle Records, and Charter Records. Typical of some of the titles of the recordings put out by these companies are "Century of the Common Man," "Six Songs for Democracy," "Walk in Peace," "Atomic Energy," "The Peekskill Story," "Unity Rhumba," "White, Brown, and Black Blues," "Talking Union," and "Red Boogie." (u)

Keynote Recordings featured Russian songs rendered by the Red Army Chorus and other Soviet choral groups, which were reproduced from (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

master records obtained from Amtorg, the Soviet trading corporation in the United States. One record manufactured by this firm consists of songs sung by Paul Robeson--on one side is the "Anthem of the U. S. S. R.," and on the other, "The United Nations." (u)

The Othello Recording Corporation was founded in 1952 to make records for Robeson and other "progressive" artists who had difficulty in procuring the services of reputable recording companies in putting their talents on wax. One of the products of this firm is a record album entitled "Robeson Sings." (u)

A long-playing record was released in 1954 by a communist front organization called the National Committee to Secure Justice for Morton Sobell in the Rosenberg Case.* Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were sentenced to death, and Morton Sobell to 30 years' imprisonment, in 1951, for conspiring to commit atomic espionage for the Soviet Union. Entitled "The Rock," the record is in the form of a dramatic presentation which purports to tell the "truth" regarding Sobell's conviction. The record includes excerpts from testimony at Sobell's trial and from letters he has written to his wife while in prison. A piano supplies background music. (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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In 1955, another long-playing record called "The Investigator" made its appearance. Written by Reuben Ship, a Canadian who was deported from the United States in 1953 for his Communist Party membership, this recording is a satire on Congressional investigations. Communists felt that Ship's record would prove to be an effective propaganda force in their fight against future Government investigations. (u)

The exploitation of intellectuals for communist propaganda purposes has been described in an earlier monograph in this series. During the history of the American communist movement, many prominent personalities in the art and entertainment world have been easily persuaded to lend their names, and frequently their time and talents, to an endless variety of communist front organizations, campaigns, and causes. A sizable number, of course, have been communists or communist sympathizers who have made their contributions out of devotion to the communist movement. Many noncommunist artists and entertainers, however, have been prompted to do so because of their altruistic beliefs or because of their inordinate love of publicity. Whatever the reason, the exploitation of well-known painters, composers, musicians, singers, dancers, actors, actresses, playwrights, producers, and other artists and entertainers has proved to be of inestimable value to communist propagandists. (u)

II. MISCELLANEOUS PROPAGANDA VEHICLES

A. Schools

Communist schools have never been organized for academic reasons alone, nor have they been devoted to education for its own sake. On the contrary, communist schools have existed only for the purpose of indoctrinating Communist Party members and sympathizers, training new cadres of Party leadership, propagandizing noncommunists, and providing centers and rallying points for communist activity. Communist schools concentrate on teaching the role of the working class--and the Communist Party as their leader--in destroying the capitalist system. (u)

Since its earliest days, the Communist Party, USA, has conducted training schools for its members on a national, district, state, and local level. Its students are carefully selected with respect to previous Party experience and training. Schools are held for new members, advanced members, cadres, teachers, trade-union members, women, Negroes, youth, Party leaders, professional people, nationality groups, et cetera. The object, of course, is to make better communist organizers, agitators, and propagandists out of Party members. (u)

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Communist front schools are operated under the guise of furnishing "workers' education." Actually, however, they serve as a center for indoctrination, as a medium of communist propaganda, and as a recruiting agency for Communist Party members. In 1923, the first communist front school, the New York Workers School, * was organized under the jurisdiction of the executive committee of the Workers Party of America, by which name the Communist Party was then known. This school was designed to give workers a knowledge of Marxist-Leninist ideology essential for militant activity in the struggle against capitalism. (u)

As a result of its success, the New York Workers School was re-created in many of the larger cities throughout the United States, including Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco, and Seattle. The curricula of all these schools were dedicated to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, revolutionary strategy and tactics, planning of strikes, and agitation and propaganda. (u)

At the outbreak of World War II, the Communist Party, USA, adopted a pseudopatriotic line in a propaganda attempt to disguise its revolutionary ideas. Various communist front schools already existing (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

in this country, or soon established, were given such names as the Jefferson School of Social Science* in New York City, the Samuel Adams School* in Boston, the Abraham Lincoln School* in Chicago, the California Labor School in San Francisco, and the People's Educational Center* in Los Angeles. (u)

The Jefferson School of Social Science (JSSS) was the propaganda showcase of the Communist Party's efforts to provide "adult education" of a "progressive" nature. This school was founded in 1944 by a merger of two communist front schools, the New York Workers School and the School for Democracy.* (u)

The JSSS pretended to represent Jeffersonian principles, but its basic courses were comprised of the classic works of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, V. I. Lenin, and Joseph Stalin. The class struggle, "capitalist imperialism," economic crises, racial discrimination, the advances of communism, and the accomplishments of Soviet Russia were highlighted in its instruction. Noncontroversial courses, such as "Guitar Playing and Song Leading" and "Conversational Spanish," were also included in the curriculum to connote the school's "non-partisan" character. (u)

To supplement its regular night courses, the JSSS had several annexes, an extension division, a trade-union division, and a full-time school. (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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The school also provided courses for children, and maintained a summer camp, a dramatic workshop, and a chorus. (u)

Before it ceased operation in December, 1956, after 13 years, the JSSS could boast of more than 120,000 enrollments at the main school, plus thousands more at its various annexes and extension classes. A peak enrollment of over 14,000 was reached in 1946-1947. (u)

B. Camps

Another channel of communist propaganda closely allied in function with communist schools is the summer camp. To communists, a summer camp is more than a site given over to recreational activity. Like schools, summer camps represent a device by which communists strive to indoctrinate and propagandize Communist Party members, sympathizers, and noncommunists and to capture the minds of youngsters. (u)

Communist camps which cater to adults and children are situated in rural areas near big cities. The camps are staffed by managers, counselors, instructors, and entertainers with extensive records of communist activity. (u)

The activities of communist-run camps are carefully designed to inculcate a high regard for the symbols and shibboleths of communism and a contempt and hatred for American principles and concepts of democracy. Lectures and discussions dispense the current communist political and propaganda line. A recent lecture series given at one camp featured such topics as "The Marxist Approach to History," "The USSR in World Affairs," "China Today," and "Perspectives for World Labor." (u)

Entertainment proffered at these camps consists of dramatic presentations and skits containing social or political messages. The circulation of petitions and collection of funds for various "progressive" causes are commonplace at such camps. In one camp, campers helped to form a picket line around a factory in a nearby town where a strike was in progress. (u)

Communist camps have been located throughout the country, from New England to California. Some of the most prominent communist camps which have existed over the years are Wingdale Camp, in Wingdale, New York; Camp Beacon, in Beacon, New York; Arrowhead Lodge, in Ellenville, New York; Camp Lakeland, * in Hopewell Junction, New York; Crystal Lake Lodge, in Chestertown, New York; Camp Midvale, in Midvale, New Jersey; and Camp Summerdale, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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Wingdale Camp, formerly known as Camp Unity, * is perhaps the largest of these communist-operated camps. It was founded about 1931 and was built to accommodate some 1,000 persons. (u)

Children's camps have occupied a significant role in the communist education and propaganda program. The Young Pioneers of America (YPA), * a communist children's front organization which flourished before World War II, once operated some 30 camps all over the country. (u)

Attendance at YPA camps was not restricted to the children of communist parents. Every effort was made to attract the children of noncommunists with the hope of converting them to communism and, through them, influencing their parents and other children. The purpose of YPA camps was to train children to become "fighters for the working class."(93) YPA camps were used as a weapon to prevent "workers' " children from becoming tainted with capitalist ideas at camps sponsored by the Boy and Girl Scouts and by the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations. (u)

At YPA camps, the tenets of communism were inculcated on children and they were subjected to anti-American and antireligious instruction. Here they were taught allegiance to communism and the necessity for world revolution. The pattern of communist indoctrination and propaganda was (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

subtly and thoroughly applied. One YPA camp was laid out with a "red square," in the center of which was a flagpole. Every morning, the children were required to salute the red flag and pledge allegiance to it. Tents and streets in the camp were named in honor of Soviet and American communist leaders. Meetings were held in "Lenin Hall," and sports and games were played on the "Victory Playground." (u)

Every known appeal to children was clothed in attractive but deceptive guise. Revolutionary themes permeated all sports, games, story-telling sessions, songs, pageants, and group studies. (u)

In addition to summer sessions, some YPA camps were open during the Easter vacation for a short training period. Reunions of the children attending these camps were held regularly so that the original enthusiasm for communism would not die out during the school year.[94] (u)

C. Visual Aids

Visual aids have been employed by the Communist Party, USA, by communist front organizations, and by left-wing labor unions as a means of disseminating propaganda. These visual aids include filmstrips, slides, lecture-discussion charts and maps, and similar devices designed to give the communist interpretation to history, current events, labor, science, and civil rights and to social, economic, and political problems. (u)

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Various types of visual aids were used by the Communist Party in 1947 in connection with Federal legislation aimed at outlawing the Communist Party. In the late 1940's, Party clubs in all parts of the country were displaying film strips bearing such captions as "Moscow's Subway," "China's Home Front," "Up and Atom," "Races of Mankind," "U.S.S.R.," "Why Work for Nothing?" and "Who Owns America?" "Who Owns America?" presents the usual communist propaganda picture of rich capitalists exploiting the working people in the United States. (u)

A half-hour film strip entitled "Was Justice Done?" was issued in 1957 by the National Committee to Secure Justice for Morton Sobell in the Rosenberg Case. The film, which is accompanied by a recorded commentary, allegedly shows how the Rosenbergs and Sobell were "framed" by the United States Government.[95] (u)

Lecture-discussion charts covering a wide range of subjects, ideas, and events have been used frequently by communists as a visual aid. Characteristic charts have been those entitled "Dialectical and Historical Materialism," "Capitalist Crisis," "Imperialism and Social Decay," "May Day," "Women at Work," and "Education and Progress." (u)

Audience participation through charts is also utilized. A "chart song" produced by one communist front contained a number of panels of cartoons, each presenting a symbol or picture of "social" significance. The audience was urged to join in the chorus following each verse, which was sung by a leader. (U)

A filmstrip called "Sing and Win," issued by another front organization, was accompanied by an illustrated booklet which enabled those watching the film to actively participate by following the words and music. This film attacked American election procedures, the "racism" of the late Senator Theodore Bilbo, and the United Nations.[96] (U)

D. Awards and Prizes

Through the medium of awards and prizes, the Communist Party, USA, and its allied organizations have endeavored to stimulate and reward their own members and sympathizers and to exert propaganda appeal to noncommunists. Awards and prizes are offered for many different accomplishments--creative writing, enrollment of new members, subscriptions to the communist press, et cetera. Creative writing contests invariably feature fiction, poetry, and plays relating to the class struggle, racial discrimination, civil liberties, fascism, war, peace, and similar communist propaganda stand-bys. (U)

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

In 1927, the Daily Worker offered three books as prizes to readers for stories on conditions in the United States as workers saw them. The New Theatre League conducted two contests in 1935 for short "social protest" plays. One, in conjunction with a communist front organization called the American League Against War and Fascism, * gave prizes of $125, $50, and $25 for plays against war and fascism. The other, in collaboration with another front known as the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, * offered prizes of $50 each for a play on Negro life and a play about Angelo Herndon, a Negro who had been sentenced to a Georgia chain gang. (u)

As a prize for enrolling new members, several years ago one Communist Party district awarded the position of fraternal delegate to the national convention of the Communist Party, USA. In 1949, a Party member won a free vacation trip to Puerto Rico for obtaining a record number of subscriptions to the Daily Worker. (u)

In 1954, a communist monthly cultural magazine called Masses & Mainstream* began to grant $100 annual awards for creative writing in honor of William Weiner, deceased treasurer of the Communist Party, USA. One award is given for the best poetry, and another for the (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

best prose work appearing in that publication during the year. The poetry prize for the first year was granted for a poem concerning the experiences of a defendant in a Smith Act trial.[97, 98] (u)

E. Flags and Emblems

In the first two decades of its existence particularly, the Communist Party, USA, made extensive use of flags, emblems, and pins as propaganda vehicles. The communist movement in the United States early adopted the red flag with the symbol of the hammer and sickle as its official banner. In the 1920's and 1930's, the scarlet banner of communism appeared at all important communist functions and celebrations. It was accorded a place of honor on the platform in meeting halls and was carried proudly in the front ranks of parades. At funerals, the Soviet flag draped the caskets of American communist leaders and those communists who had been killed during clashes with police.[99] (u)

The Communist Party once realized some propaganda from an unusual source. In 1931, one Betsy Ross, who was reputed to be a descendant of the celebrated colonial flag maker, made a red flag and presented it to the Communist Party at a meeting in Cleveland.[100] (u)

The Communist Party has never had any official uniform, although a number of years ago, in one city, young communists paraded in red and blue (u)

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uniforms. Red arm bands frequently have been worn in communist parades, in demonstrations, at funerals, and on other occasions.[101] At a mass funeral in 1931 for two Negroes killed by Cleveland police, communists, wearing red arm bands, directed traffic near the funeral home.[102] During the flooding of the Ohio River Valley in 1937, a communist functionary who assisted in the rescue work wore an arm band flaunting the name of the Communist Party.[103] (u)

In the early days of the communist movement, white handkerchiefs, embroidered with a red hammer and sickle, were carried at mass meetings and parades. (u)

The pennant was a popular ornament of the past. Small red pennants sold in honor of the May Day celebration of 1927, which were printed in gold and bore the sign of the hammer and sickle, called for the United States to keep "Hands Off" China, Mexico, and Nicaragua.[104] (u)

Inexpensive pins, buttons, and badges displaying communist symbols and inscriptions have been widely used for years by the Communist Party. Some have contained a star emblem with a raised hammer and sickle against a red background. Others have borne inscriptions, such as the following: "Build the Communist Party," "Read the Daily Worker," (u)

"Boycott Nazi Germany," "Food for Spain," "Save the Scottsboro Boys," "May 1st, Unite--Fight Fascism, Hunger, War!" "20 Years Soviet Power--for Friendship and Collaboration, USA-USSR," and "Peace." (u)

By the late 1930's, however, when the Communist Party, USA, began to propagandize itself as a legitimate American "political" party, the Party largely ceased to use flags, emblems, pins, and other accoutrements bearing the Soviet motif. The American flag, colored bunting, and other traditional American decorations began to appear more frequently on communist platforms, in parades and demonstrations, and at other functions. (u)

F. Sports

Just as the Russians have extracted propaganda from their athletic achievements, so American communists have exploited sports in the United States for reasons of propaganda. (u)

In the 1920's and 1930's, a communist front called the Labor Sports Union (LSU)* existed in this country for the express purpose of appealing to and propagandizing young people through a sports program. Once in the LSU, members were subjected to communist indoctrination and were later induced to join the Young Communist League and the Communist Party. (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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The LSU, which was the American section of an international communist front organization called the Red Sports International, agitated and propagandized against the use of "capitalist-controlled" sports for militarism and war, against Sunday blue laws, for the release of "political" prisoners, for the support of communist candidates in elections, and for unity with Soviet athletes. (4)

Activities of the LSU were typified by the "Free Tom Mooney Runs" held under its auspices in the Spring of 1932 in several Midwestern cities. The runners wore signs on their jerseys reading "Free Tom Mooney," "Demonstrate May 1," and "Join the L. S. U."[105] (4)

Other communist sports organizations existed for brief periods in the United States during the 1930's and 1940's. Among them were the Labor Sports League and the Labor Sports Federation, both composed of communist youth groups and communist-run labor unions.[106, 107] (4)

During the Spanish Civil War, the Daily Worker and the International Workers Order sponsored a number of special basketball and soccer games and swimming meets called the "Game for Spain." The proceeds of these events were sent to the Spanish Loyalist Army.[108, 109, 110] (4)

Basketball tournaments were held in the late 1930's in which teams competed for the Daily Worker Cup. After World War II, teams representing the American Youth for Democracy, * a communist front, and a number of communist-dominated labor unions participated in an annual Labor Basketball Tourney under the auspices of the Labor Sports Federation. (111, 112) (u)

The class struggle has been a component part of communist propaganda in sports, just as it is in all other spheres of communist activity. American communists have been particularly alert to extract the fullest possible propaganda from the phenomenal performances of Negro athletes in recent years. (u)

Communists give themselves credit for breaking the color line in professional baseball. Before World War II, the Daily Worker published several series of interviews with major league owners, executives, managers, and players concerning the possibility of accepting qualified Negro players. In 1940, signatures to petitions initiated by the Daily Worker and various left-wing trade-unions and organizations were submitted to Kenesaw M. Landis, then baseball commissioner, which urged that Negro players be admitted to the big leagues. An organization known as the Committee to End Jimcrow in Baseball was also formed. (113) (u)

*See Appendix for citation.

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In the postwar period, the Daily Worker launched a letter-writing campaign to major league owners demanding that they sign qualified Negro players. When Branch Rickey, then president of the Brooklyn Dodgers, announced in April, 1947, that the Dodgers had purchased the contract of Jackie Robinson from a minor league team, the Daily Worker claimed it was this publication that had "brought the issue into the open and kept hammering at it."(114) (u)

In the last ten years, many Negro players have established themselves as stars and made outstanding records in baseball. But the Daily Worker has kept up a propaganda drumfire to force the few remaining "lily-white" clubs to sign Negro players. This campaign has been widened to demand that baseball make room for Negro umpires and managers.(115, 116) (u)

Until the rise of Althea Gibson in the tennis world, communists repeatedly attacked tennis as an "undemocratic" sport, patronized only by the "ultra-ultra monied set." The complaint was that few players came from the "other side of the tracks," and that racial discrimination prevailed in big American tennis tournaments.(117) (u)

In the 1956 Olympic games tryouts, Charley Dumas, a 19-year-old Negro high jumper, cleared the seven-foot mark. The Daily Worker (u)

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observed that, considering Dumas and all the other Negroes who would comprise the United States Olympic team, this country would have fared poorly if "southern racists" had been in charge of selecting the team.(118) (u)

The exploitation of class antagonisms is also apparent when communist propagandists seek to portray the owners of professional athletic teams as "heartless" and "profit-mad." One communist sports writer commented, following the transfer of the Brooklyn Dodgers to Los Angeles in the Fall of 1957, that there "is something wrong with the setup where one man holding the purse strings can do this thing to millions in Brooklyn in the quest for bigger personal profits even though he's made good money every...year in Brooklyn." This writer hastened to predict that "American Socialism" will be "something better than anything the world has yet seen."(119) (u)

As we have seen in this and in preceding monographs, there are few, if any, propaganda media which have not been used, at one time or another, by American communists. The vehicles of propaganda and agitation employed by the Communist Party, USA, over the years are numerous and diverse. All of them, of course, have but one objective--that of eventually destroying the United States Government and supplanting it with a communist dictatorship. Communists will continue to take full advantage of every conceivable means to facilitate the dissemination of their mendacious propaganda. (u)

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Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

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APPENDIX

Organizations listed hereinafter have been designated by the Attorney General pursuant to Executive Order 10450 or have been cited by Congressional or state committees. (u)

Those cited by the Attorney General have been identified with the notation (Executive Order 10450) following the name of the organization. (u)

Those cited by Congressional or state committees are listed in two editions of the Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications prepared and released by the Committee on Un-American Activities of the United States House of Representatives, Washington, D. C., on May 14, 1951, and January 2, 1957. They have been identified with the edition and page number of the Guide following the name of the organization. (u)

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The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

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